CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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LETTER DATED 8 MARCH 1990 FROM THE PERMANENT OBSERVER OF THE DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT TRANSMITTING THE STATEMENT OF THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS IN CONNECTION WITH DISARMAMENT ON THE KOREAN PENINSULA, ISSUED IN PYONGYANG ON 5 MARCH 1990

I have the honour to transmit herewith the statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in connection with disarmament on the Korean Peninsula, issued in Pyongyang, 5 March 1990.

I should be grateful if you could circulate it as an information document of the Conference on Disarmament.

(Signed): Ri Tcheul
Ambassador

Statement of the Foreign Ministry of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea

Regional disputes are being solved through negotiations and steps for disarmament and withdrawal of foreign troops put into practice in the current trend of international détente and reconciliation.

On the Korean peninsula, however, no agreement for the relaxation of tension has been reached and confrontation continues.

The North and the South of Korea are standing in acute confrontation with huge armed forces along the military demarcation line.

The United States keeps its troops more than 43,000 strong in South Korea and has shipped there more than 1,000 pieces of nuclear weapons of all kinds, means of their delivery and even neutron bombs.

The nuclear war strategy of the United States is in fact entering a stage of full-scale practice on the Korean peninsula.

Thus, a dangerous situation which cannot be found in any other part of the world constantly prevails in Korea and it gives rise to apprehensions of the world's peace-loving people.

For the relaxation of the tension and guarantee of peace on the Korean peninsula, it is imperative to defuse the military confrontation through military cuts.

From its consistent stand to achieve détente and peace on the Korean peninsula through military reduction, the Government of our Republic advanced a series of reasonable proposals and took initiatives in recent years including a proposal to discontinue arms build-up and arms race and a proposal to convert the Korean peninsula into a nuclear-free, peace zone.

Notably, in July 1987, it put forward a proposal for the North and the South to cut their armed forces stage by stage down to less than 100,000 men by 1992 and, keeping pace with this, to completely withdraw the United States forces on a phased basis from South Korea and make mutual information and international verification for this and proposed a multinational disarmament negotiation to discuss this problem.

And last year it urged the United States and the South Korean authorities to hold at an early date negotiations for the conversion of the Korean peninsula into a nuclear-free zone even before reaching a blanket agreement on the disarmament question in face of the ever-growing danger of nuclear war on the Korean peninsula.

The DPRK Government has not only put forward disarmament proposals but also unilaterally slashed the Korean people's army by 100,000 men by the end of 1987 in order to make a substantial breakthrough in arms reduction on the Korean peninsula and, earlier, took a positive step of mobilizing 150,000 troops in peaceful construction.

Up until now, however, the United States and the South Korean authorities have failed to show any response to our reasonable proposals and sincere efforts for disarmament, and are taking the road of reinforcing and streamlining the United States forces present in South Korea on the pretext of fictitious "threat from the North" and are aggravating the situation on the Korean peninsula by their annual provocative "team spirit" joint military exercises.

Facts clearly show that it is entirely because of their line of confrontation and war that the danger of war has not been removed and the unstable situation of growing tension is prevailing on the Korean peninsula.

A brisk debate over troop pullout has arisen within the United States itself, whilst the demand for the withdrawal of the United States forces from South Korea is mounting rapidly among the South Korean people and the world's peace-loving people at present.

Against this background, United States Defence Secretary Cheney visited South Korea some time ago and discussed matters of the United States troop pullout from South Korea.

But the United States, while talking about a partial withdrawal of the United States troops from South Korea, insists that it should be a "readjustment of armed forces" in any case and the main combat forces and military means would be left in South Korea.

On the other hand, they make incoherent remarks claiming that "a visible arms reduction" would be impossible unless the North takes steps for détente, and the United States forces must be kept in South Korea as "a deterrent".

All this causes many doubts about the ulterior intention of the United States in advertising "pullout".

As everyone knows, the DPRK Government has declared on many occasions that it has no intention to "invade the South" and it is not capable of doing that.

If the United States is truly interested in peace on the Korean peninsula, it must take practical steps for troop pullout, instead of talking about "readjustment of armed forces".

If the United States practically takes at least a step for partial pullout which would mark the start of the complete withdrawal of the United States forces from South Korea, we will welcome it and we are ready to take more necessary measures corresponding to it for military confidence and disarmament between the North and the South.

Peace on the Korean peninsula can be achieved only when the United States forces are withdrawn from this region and their military bases dismantled there and arms reduction is realized between the North and the South.

The DPRK Government will, as in the past, so in the future, too, make every possible effort to provide a practical guarantee for peace and security on the Korean peninsula.

We urge once again the United States and the South Korean authorities to stop such military exercises as "team spirit 90" and immediately respond to negotiations for arms reduction involving the North and the South of Korea and the United States, which was already proposed by the DPRK Government.

If the United States withdraws its troops from South Korea, this will not only conform to the desire and interests of the peoples of Korea and the United States and of the peace-loving people across the world but also create a favourable atmosphere for the realization of North-South dialogue for peace on the Korean peninsula and its reunification and, further contribute to peace and security in the Asia-Pacific region as a whole.

The South Korean authorities must not entreat for the indefinite presence of the United States forces nor act against the preservation of peace on the Korean peninsula.

Pyongyang, 5 March 1990